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INSECT, PLANT DISEASE, & WEED SCIENCE NEWS [No. 89-06] [April 25, 1989]

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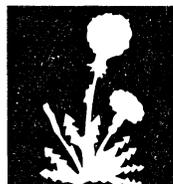
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INSECT PLANT DISEASE WEED SCIENCE

NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF AGRONOMY (WEED SCIENCE) UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN,
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No. 89-06
April 25, 1989

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- Leafy Spurge Control
- Pasture Spraying and Grazing Restrictions
- Weather Your Herbicide Works or Not

Leafy Spurge Control

Leafy spurge, an aggressive plant, continues to spread in Nebraska, greatly reducing the carrying capacity of grazingland. The weed is more common across the northern portions of the state but can be found elsewhere. Leafy spurge is a perennial and reproduces from seed as well as from buds on its deep, extensive root system. It reduces forage production and cattle avoid grazing infested areas because it is an irritant and mildly poisonous. Because of the unusually warm temperatures this spring, the development of the plant is about two weeks ahead of schedule.

Control on a large area is costly and difficult. Small patches should be treated before they spread and become a more costly problem. Plants in a new infestation are more readily controlled than established stands because the root system is not fully developed. The ideal time to treat leafy spurge in much of Nebraska is from mid-May to June. Leafy spurge is easily spotted at this time as the tops of plants are a bright yellow. All parts of the plant contain a white milky sap. Once leafy spurge has become well established it cannot be eliminated with a single herbicide treatment.

Herbicides for leafy spurge control are 2,4-D ester (4 lb/gallon) at 2 qt/A, 1 qt of 2,4-D + 1 pt of Tordon/A or Tordon 22K at 2 to 4 qt/A. The treatments would cost \$5.00 per acre for 2,4-D, \$14.00 for 2,4-D + Tordon and from \$45.00 to \$90.00 per acre for Tordon. Treatments with 2,4-D should be made in the spring just before the plant flowers. A second treatment in the late fall, if moisture permits good regrowth, provides increased control. If only one treatment per year is possible, it should be made in the spring. Don't expect to get rid of leafy spurge in 1 or 2 years. It will take several years to make progress.

Tordon 22K is much more effective than 2,4-D against leafy spurge. A 2 qt/A application usually provides 50-80% control a year later, and the 4 qt rate gives 90-100% control. Spring is the best time to apply Tordon, although it is also effective at other times of the year. Tordon is long-lasting and mobile in the soil. It should not be used near trees or on sandy soil where the water table is within 15 feet of the soil surface at any time.



Pasture Spraying and Grazing Restrictions

Grazing restrictions on sprayed pastures vary with the herbicide and the type of livestock. With 2,4-D, do not graze animals on treated areas for 7 days after treatment. Dairy animals should not graze treated areas for 14 days after treatment. Remove meat animals from treated areas 7 days prior to slaughter. Withdrawal is not needed if 14 days have elapsed since treatment. Do not cut treated grass for hay within 30 days of treatment.

With Banvel the grazing restrictions vary with the application rate and the type of livestock. Meat animals should be removed from treated areas 30 days before slaughter. For dairy animals the grazing restriction is 7 days for a 1 pt Banvel per acre application and 21 days for a 1 qt per acre application. Do not harvest hay for dairy animals within 37 days of a 1 pt per acre Banvel application and within 51 days of a 1 qt per acre application. There is no restriction on hay fed to meat animals. When Banvel is used with 2,4-D, grazing restrictions are the same as for Banvel alone.

With Tordon, do not move grazing livestock from treated pasture to broadleaf crop areas without first allowing 7 days grazing on untreated pastures. Otherwise there are no grazing restrictions with Tordon.

With Crossbow, lactating dairy animals should not graze treated areas for one year following treatment. Livestock should be removed from treated areas 3 days before slaughter. Do not make hay from treated areas for one year following treatment.

Liquid fertilizers used as carriers for herbicide applications should not cause additional hazards to livestock. Grazing limitations would remain the same.

Weather Your Herbicide Works or Not

The dry spring we've had so far may adversely affect some early preplant treatments. All preemergence applications require rainfall to activate them, including early preplant treatments. In some situations, very little or no rainfall has occurred since these treatments were applied. This doesn't present a problem as long as the weeds haven't germinated. However, in some situations there may be enough moisture present to cause weeds to come on.

If weeds do start to emerge, you don't necessarily have to hit the panic button. With herbicides like atrazine, Bladex, and Lexone/Sencor, weeds will germinate, emerge, and may get 1/2 inch tall or so before the herbicide has any effect. Check to see if the leaves are turning brown on the margins. If this is the case, then the herbicide is starting to kill the weed. If the weed shows no sign of injury and it is past the second true leaf stage, then you'd be advised to come in with a rescue treatment of Roundup or Gramoxone or rotary hoe prior to crop emergence.

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